

Eggplant "Steaks"

2 small eggplants
1 tsp. salt
3 Tbsp. olive oil
1/4 tsp. hot sauce
1 clove garlic, minced
1 Tbsp. balsamic vinegar
1 tsp. minced fresh parsley
1/3 tsp. dried rosemary
Salt and pepper, to taste

- Remove the stem ends from the eggplants and trim the skin to square the sides. Slice each eggplant lengthwise into two pieces, each approximately 3/4-inch thick. Sprinkle 1 tsp. salt evenly over the slices and place in a bowl for about 20 minutes to draw out the bitterness. Rinse well and pat dry.
- Heat the oven to 350 degrees F.
- In a small bowl, stir together 2 Tbsp. of the oil and the hot sauce. Brush evenly over both sides of the eggplant slices. Bake on a baking sheet for 15 minutes, turning once. Then broil for 1 minute per side or until the slices are well-browned and tender.
- In a small bowl, stir together the remaining oil, garlic, vinegar, parsley and rosemary. Brush on the cooked eggplant and season with salt and pepper. Let stand for 5 minutes before serving

Tomato and Watermelon Salad with Feta, Pine Nuts and Mint

The bright colors, not to mention flavors, of watermelon and tomato slices stacked and topped with fresh mint make an eye-catching display. Take care to cut even slices of tomato and watermelon for an especially beautiful presentation.

- 2 cups balsamic vinegar
- 2 large ripe tomatoes
- 1/4 medium watermelon
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon sugar
- 1/2 cup toasted pine nuts
- 1/2 cup crumbled feta cheese
- finishing sea salt
- 1/4 cup shredded fresh mint

Heat the balsamic vinegar in a small saucepan over low heat until the volume is reduced by half, 20 to 30 minutes. Remove from heat and let cool to room temperature. Core tomatoes and cut each one into four 1/4-inch-thick slices. You need eight slices total. Cut eight 1/4-inch-thick slices of watermelon. Trim the rind and cut slices into rectangles of equal sizes, about 2 inches wide by 3 inches long. Spread watermelon and tomato slices out on a plate. Drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle with salt and sugar. On each of four serving plates, layer 2 slices of watermelon and tomato, starting with watermelon and alternating with tomato. Sprinkle pine nuts and feta over the watermelon and tomato stacks. Drizzle with balsamic reduction, zigzagging back and forth across the plate. Sprinkle each stack with a pinch of finishing salt and fresh mint.

